

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GENEVA 07352 01 OF 02 261955Z

ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-10 EA-10
NEA-10 L-03 FRB-03 OMB-01 ITC-01 SP-02 USIA-06
AGRE-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 INR-07 LAB-04
NSAE-00 OIC-02 SIL-01 STR-04 TRSE-00 CEA-01 SS-15
OPIC-03 XMB-02 /134 W

-----076472 262037Z /70

P R 261924Z AUG 77

FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 669

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 GENEVA 7352

USEEC USOECD

E O 11652: NA

TAGS: UNCTAD

SUBJ: UNCTAD: INFORMAL GROUP B CAUCUS ON UNCTAD SENIOR OFFICIALS

MEETING SEPTEMBER 5-9

1. AT US INITIATIVE, AN INFORMAL CAUCUS OF GROUP B ON THE UNCTAD MINISTERIAL TDB HAS BEEN MEETING DAILY. INTENTION IS TO IDENTIFY ISSUES ON WHICH DECISIONS SHOULD BE MADE BY SENIOR OFFICIALS MEETING SEPTEMBER 5-9. THERE HAS BEEN AN AGREEMENT NOT TO MAKE DEFINITIVE DECISIONS UNTIL NEXT WEEK WHEN MORE SENIOR OFFICIALS ARRIVE ON SOME OF THE EC DELEGATIONS. NEXT MEETING IS TUESDAY, AUGUST 30.

2. AFTER FOUR DAYS OF DISCUSSING THE ISSUES HAVE JELLED AS FOLLOWS:

A. OUTCOME OF THE MINISTERIAL MEETING.

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PAGE 02 GENEVA 07352 01 OF 02 261955Z

A COMMUNIQUE IS FAVORED OVER RESOLUTIONS BECAUSE DIFFERENCES COULD MORE EASILY BE HIDDEN IN THE LATTER. GROUP B DOES NOT WANT A CONFRONTATION, AND THE UNCTAD SECRETARIAT WANTS A SUCCESSFUL MEETING. IT IS BELIEVED G-77 WANT RESOLUTIONS TO FORCE MINISTERIAL POLITICAL DECISIONS ON DEBT. THERE HAVE BEEN SOME INDICATIONS THAT G-77 MAY WANT TO USE THE DISCUSSION OF THE AGENDA AT THE SEPTEMBER HIGH OFFICIALS

MEETING TO BEGIN THE NEGOTIATIONS.

B. AGENDA OF MINISTERS

ALL AGREE THAT DEBT WILL BE ON THE AGENDA. THERE HAVE BEEN A NUMBER OF SUGGESTIONS AS TO HOW IT COULD BE PACKAGED, E.G., CONDENSING 94(IV) AND 98(IV) INTO ONE TOPIC. NO ONE KNOWS WHAT TO DO WITH OLD DRAFT RESOLUTION TD/L/24 ON LDC DEBT. SECRETARIAT, SCANDINAVIANS AND EC ALL BELIEVE IT OF VALUE TO EXPAND THE AGENDA IN A LIMITED WAY SO ALL DISCUSSIONS DON'T RIFE ON DEBT. A NUMBER OF ITEMS HAVE BEEN SUGGESTED BUT NO ONE FOR TACTICAL REASONS WISHES TO PUST A LIST TOWARD THE G-77. THE DOWNSIDE RISK ON THIS ISSUE IS THAT THE G-77 MIGHT WANT THE ISSUE OF INTERDEPENDENCE ON THE AGENDA. IDEA OF HAVING A SECOND, TWO DAY, HIGH OFFICIALS MEETING IN DECEMBER FOR FURTHER AGENDA DISCUSSION HAS GENERAL APPROVAL. THIS WOULD HOLD AGENDA OPEN TO SEE FALLOUT FROM IMF/IBRD MEETING, NOVEMBER COMMON FUND MEETING AND UNGA.

C. LENGTH OF MINISTERIAL MEETING

IF MINISTERS ARE TO ACTUALLY ATTEND, THEN THE GROUP B CONSENSUS IS THAT SESSION WILL NEED TO BE SHORT. TWO

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PAGE 01 GENEVA 07352 02 OF 02 262010Z
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 GENEVA 7352

DAYS SEEM TO BE ACCEPTABLE. HOWEVER, ALL SEEM TO AGREE

THAT A SHORT MEETING WILL REQUIRE A PREPARATORY CONFERENCE OF SENIOR OFFICIALS TO DECIDE AND DRAFT WHAT THE MINISTERS WILL ACT UPON. GHE G-77, OF COURSE, WANT POLITICAL DECISIONS THAT WILL OVERRIDE THE RESERVATIONS OF "TECHNICIANS" WHO HAVE BEEN HANDLING THE DEBT ISSUE.

D. RECONVENING AND MANDATE OF THE SECOND EXPERTS GROUP ON DEBT

GENERAL FEELING IN GROUP B IS THAT THIS MEETING SHOULD BE USED IN PREPARATION OF EXPERT PAPERS FOR THE MINISTERIAL. EC, SPECIFICALLY DUTCH, BELGIANS AND BRITISH HAVE PUSHED TO HAVE EC/US DEBT FEATURES PAPER INTRODUCED IN THE SENIOR OFFICIAL SESSION. FRENCH WISH TO INTRODUCE US/EC PAPER AS A UNCTAD RESOLUTION. NORWAY, SWEDEN, FINLAND AND AUSTRIA RESERVED ON WHETHER THEY WOULD ENDORSE US/EC PAPER AS A GROUP B POSITION. BRITISH HAVE PROPOSED A VERY LIMITED MANDATE FOR DISCUSSION WHICH WOULD ALLOW DEBT EXPERTS GROUP ONLY TO LAY OUT US/EC DOCUMENT IN JUXTALIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 GENEVA 07352 02 OF 02 262010Z

POSITION TO THE G-19, SHOW THE SIMILARITIES AND EXPLAIN THE DIFFERENCES. THE US HAS RESERVED ON THIS DISCUSSION PENDING CONTACT WITH WASHINGTON AND BETTER FORMULATION OF IDEAS ON JUST WHAT GROUP B MIGHT WANT OUT OF THE MINISTERIAL IN JANUARY. EC WILL NOT TABLE EC/US PROPOSAL WITHOUT US CONCURRENCE. US ATTENDANCE AT OCTOBER EXPERTS MEETING IS STILL CONDITIONAL ON WHETHER THERE IS A CONSTRUCTIVE REASON FOR THE MEETING.

3. COMMENT: INFORMAL CAUCUS HAS BECOME WHAT IS REFERRED TO IN GENEVA 6214 AS A HIGH-LEVEL COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON THE DEBT ISSUE. NEED TO KNOW IF THE US WANTS TO MAKE THE US/EC FEATURES PAPER AN ACTIVE PROPOSAL OF DEBT EXPERT CONSIDERATION AND IF SO HOW. WE HAVE MADE THE POINT CLEAR IN GROUP B THAT US CONSIDERS THE DOCUMENT NON-NEGOTIABLE. NECESSITY OF US CONSENT TO INTRODUCE US/EC FEATURES PAPER AND US CONDITIONS ON ATTENDANCE AT OCTOBER DEBT EXPERTS MEETING ALLOWS LEVERAGE IN GROUP B TO SHAPE ISSUE TOWARD OUR VIEWS. HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE THERE WILL BE A DEBT EXPERTS MEETING WHETHER THE US INTENDS TO ATTEND OR NOT.

4. LDCS HAVE ONLY BEGUN TO DEVELOP THEIR POSITION FOR OFFICIALS LEVEL MEETING AND NO CLEAR CONSENSUS HAS EMERGED, ALTHOUGH ALL SEEM TO ANTICIPATE THAT DEBT WILL BE KEY TOPIC FOR MINISTERIAL MEETING.

5. AS INDICATED IN MEISSNER-WINDER TELECON, DELEGATION WILL NEED PRESENCE OF DEBT EXPERT EARLY NEXT WEEK. VANDEN HEUVEL

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